

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
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CSAF WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 6307

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCON NATO MILI
SUBJ: TAD: RESULTS OF IEPG NAD MEETING APRIL 3-4, 1978

REF: USNATO 03469

1. EVENING OF APRIL 5 MFA NATO OFFICE HEAD DE FRANCHIS GAVE EMBOFF
BRIEFING ON IEPG APRIL 3-4 MEETING HERE IN ROME.
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2. AGREED MINUTES ARE NOT AVAILABLE YET BUT DE FRANCHIS
TRIED TO RECONSTRUCT GENERAL TEMPER AND ATMOSPHERE OF THE
IEPG MEETING FROM RATHER COPIOUS NOTES. HIS ASSESSMENT WAS
CONSIDERABLY MORE POSITIVE THAN THAT REPORTEDREFTTEL. THE
MEETING FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON THE TAD AND ALTHOUGH THERE WERE
SOME RESERVATIONS, AND AGREEMENT WAS NOT REACHED ON KEY ELEMENTS

IN THE US/CANADA-PROPOSED TOR, DE FRANCHIS THOUGHT IT REPRESENTED AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE IEPG.

3. DE FRANCHIS ASSERTED, AS HE HAS OFTEN IN THE PAST, THAT IEPG IS STILL A FRAGILE MECHANISM, ITS VERY EXISTENCE IS REMARKABLE, BUT THE U.S. TENDS TO OVERESTIMATE WHAT ITS CAPABILITIES ARE. THE IEPG HAS GROWN, STEP BY STEP, AS THE TAD WILL GROW STEP BY STEP, BUT GROWTH TAKES PLACE IN A SOMETIMES LESS THAN FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT. WE NEED TO BE PATIENT. AND WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE HOW MUCH HAS ALREADY BEEN ACCOMPLISHED.

4. THE IEPG HAS AGREED TO GROUP ON OBSTACLES WITH TWO-WAY MANDATE. PROPOSAL FOR TWO OTHER GROUPS CONTAINED IN US/CANADIAN PROPOSAL WAS REMANDED FOR STUDY BY IEPG PANELS I AND III. THE PANELS ARE TO EXAMINE IN DETAIL THE ABILITY OF SUCH GROUPS TO DEAL WITH THE TOPICS SUGGESTED IN THE TOR, AND TO EVALUATE WHICH ITEMS COULD BE PLACED ON THE TAD AGENDA. IN LIGHT OF THAT EXAMINATION IT WILL BE DECIDED WHETHER THE TWO GROUPS ARE IN FACT NECESSARY. DE FRANCHIS SUGGESTED THAT SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED WORK OF THE AD HOC GROUPS TWO AND THREE COULD BE HANDLED WITHIN THE OBSTACLES GROUP AS IT BEGINS TO WORK AND (INEVITABLY, HE THOUGHT) ENLARGE ITS SCOPE. AND HE NOTED THAT ON BROAD ISSUES SUCH AS RATIONALIZATION AN AGREED LINE ALREADY EXISTS. GENERALLY, DE FRANCHIS THOUGHT, THE POINTS RAISED BY THE PROPOSALS FOR GROUPS TWO AND THREE WERE AT LEAST ACCEPTED AS WORTH FURTHER CLARIFICATION FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN SIDE OF THE TAD.
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5. THE OBJECTIVES CONTAINED IN THE TOR WERE "NOTED WITH INTEREST." IT WAS NOTED, SAID DE FRANCHIS, THAT THERE WERE MANY POINTS OF COMMONALITY BETWEEN THE U.S./CANADIAN PROPOSAL AND ITEMS THE IEPG HAS ALREADY IDENTIFIED AS USEFUL FOR DISCUSSION AND UPON WHICH THE IEPG "CAN SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE." IT WAS IMPORTANT IN THE IEPG'S VIEW THAT THERE BE NO DUPLICATION OF WORK ALREADY BEING DONE IN OTHER NATO BODIES (NAPR AND TASK FORCE 8 WERE SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED).

6. BUT CLEARLY THE SENSE OF THE APRIL 3-4 MEETINGS WAS THAT THE PRIORITY LIES IN THE AREA OF OBSTACLES. BUT, DE FRANCHIS INSISTED, ONCE THE DIALOGUE TOOK FORM IN THAT AREA THERE WOULD CERTAINLY BE POSITIVE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE DIALOGUE IN WHICH THE NORTH AMERICANS HAVE INTEREST.

7. DE FRANCHIS REPEATEDLY ACCENTUATED THE POSITIVE ELEMENTS THAT THE ITALIAN SIDE SAW AS HAVING EMERGED FROM THE MEETINGS. FOR THE FIRST TIME HE SAW A GENUINE CONSENSUS ON THE NEED FOR THE TAD AND A STRONG DESIRE TO GET ON WITH IT. THE CHARACTER OF THE IEPG IS EVOLVING IN THE WAY THE ITALIANS HAD HOPED: IT IS NOT SETTING PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR THAT WILL CONSTRAIN ITS FUTURE ACTIVITIES.

THOUGH THE MEMBERS ARE FULLY CONSCIOUS OF THE LIMITATIONS OF THE IEPG, THERE IS APPARENT A STRONG WILL TO MAKE IT WORK. THE U.S. HAS TO BE PATIENT, RECOGNIZING THE DIFFICULTY OF COORDINATING THE SOMETIMES WIDELY DIVERSE EXPECTATIONS OF THE IEPG MEMBERSHIP. THE KEY ELEMENT IN THE EXERCISE, DE FRANCHIS SUGGESTED, THE PURPOSE OF THE IEPG AND THE STRONG DESIRE OF THE U.S., HE THOUGHT, WAS THAT EUROPE SHOULD SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE. THE APRIL 3-4 MEETINGS, HE BELIEVED, MADE PROGRESS TOWARD THAT GOAL.HOLMES

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